

(2)

THE
CONCLUSION
OF THE
PREFATORY DISCOURSE

TO

Dr. *Johnston's* PSALMS, &c.

IN WHICH

JOHNSTON's and BUCHANAN's
TRANSLATIONS of the 1st and 104th
Psalms, and their Dedicatory EPIGRAMS to
MARY Queen of Scots, and the Countess of
Marshall, are compar'd.

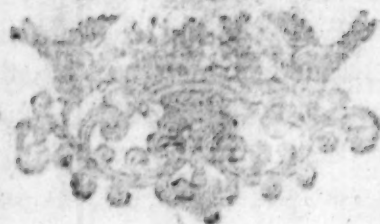


L O N D O N:

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Dr. Johnson's Parson's Poet

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THE
CONCLUSION
OF THE

PREFATORY DISCOURSE, &c.

THOUGH many Persons own themselves to be convinced (by what has been already said) that Dr. *Johnston's* Translation excels *Buchanan's*; yet there are still those who contend that some of *Buchanan's* Psalms claim the Superiority, especially the 1st and the 104th. They even go so far as to say, that this is fully evident, because they apprehend, that if any Thing more could have been objected against those Psalms than what is mentioned in the *Supplement to the Prefatory Discourse*, it would certainly have been said at that Time: Whence they conclude that picking out a Line or two in the 104th Psalm especially, will not give *Johnston* the Preference as to the whole of that inimitable Performance as they stile it. Besides this, the immortal Epigram at the Front of *Buchanan's* Transla-

tion must stand for ever unrival'd by *Johnston*, as they imagine. To redress these Errors, I shall readily undertake the Labour of comparing *Johnston* and *Buchanan* together Verse by Verse as to the two Psalms abovementioned. As to the boasted Epigram addressed to the *Caledonian Nymph*, I have another *Nymph* of the same Country to be produced on *Johnston's* Side, which will absolutely eclipse all the Charms of the former.

Psal. i. 1. *Blessed is the Man that walketh not in the Council of the Ungodly, nor standeth in the Way of Sinners, nor sitteth in the Seat of the Scornful.*

B U C H A N A N .

*Felix ille animi, quem non de tramite recto
Impia sacrilegæ flexit contagio turbæ ;
Non iter erroris tenuit, sessorve cathedræ
Pestiferæ facilem dedit irrisoribus aurem.*

J O H N S T O N .

*Felix, consiliis qui nec seductus iniquis,
Per scelus, impuro cum grege carpit iter ;
Nec quibus impietas insistit, passibus hæret ;
Nec postica tuum sanna sedile premit !*

I shall now proceed to compare these two Poets, Verse by Verse, with respect 1st, to the Translation, 2^{dly}, the Language or Stile, 3^{dly}, the Arts of Verse.

Felix ille animi ; it is no easy Matter to fix any plain Sense on this figurative Expression, which is borrowed from *Angelus Politianus*, who begins his Poem

Poem on the Happiness of a Country Life, in this Manner,

*Felix ille animi, divisque simillimus ipsis,
Quem non mendaci resplendens gloria fuco
Sollicitat, &c.——*

The Meaning of these Words in *Politianus*, is, that *He has made a wise Choice*, or *He is happy in his own Mind*; and thus they must be understood in the Psalm before us: Though this Sense falls very short of the Original, which implies all Kind of Happiness both in this World and in the next, as the Reader will perceive by attending to the whole Psalm.

—— *Quem non de tramite recto
Impia sacrilegæ flexit contagio turbæ;
Non iter erroris tenuit, sessorve cathedræ
Pestiferæ facilem dedit irrisoribus aurem:*

Learned Writers have observed, that the Royal Poet in this Place describes the Gradation of unhappy Persons from one Degree of Offence to another.

The Progress is from hearkning to bad Advice, to walking or continuing in evil Ways, and from thence to the very scorning or ridiculing of Virtue, which is the *ne plus ultra* of Impiety. Now *Buchanan* inverts all this Order, and absurdly mentions in the first Place the vile Wretches being polluted with Impiety, and even Sacrilege, and then speaks of an erroneous Way, and giving too easy an Ear to the Revilers of Religion. Nothing can be worse than this Translation, and without making any farther Animadversion upon it, I proceed to consider

sider the Language of this Verse, which is in a very low Way; *seffor cathedræ pestiferæ* is hardly *Latin*.

As to the Versification; it is exceeding bad; the two first Lines are in the common Pause; which should by all Means have been avoided.

I come now to examine *Johnston's* Translation in the same Manner. *Felix* -- Here we have all the *Latin* Language can furnish. This implies *He is happy indeed, happy in all Respects*. *Johnston* does not confine the Happiness to the Mind or the Body; to this World or the next; but leaves the Reader to what he will find in the Sequel of the Discourse.

———— *Consiliis qui nec seductus iniquis;
Per scelus, impuro cum grege carpit iter;
Nec, quibus impietas insistit, passibus hæret;
Nec postica tuum fanna sedile premit!*

Here we cannot but perceive how attentive *Johnston* was to the Original. He observes all the Steps the great Writer takes, and pursues him exactly, which makes his Translation as perfect as *Buchanan's* is faulty.

I proceed now to the Stile. This is nervous, clear and concise. We have no trifling Epithets, no ambiguous Expressions; but instead of these; all the Ornaments of Oratory: Impiety is represented as a Person, and so is Slander, and all the Expressions are delicately figurative. *Carpit iter, hæret passibus, sedile premit*, all this is exquisitely fine, but the greatest Perfection of the whole lies in the Apostrophe at the Conclusion of the Verse. Here the *Climax* ends, and for this Place, this Figure was properly reserved. This Art he learnt from his great Master, who ever employs it on such Occasions.

Is he describing a great Number of Vines, and would prefer one above all the rest ? then it is

— *Sed quo te carmine dicam*
Rhetica

Is he speaking of one of the most useful and most extraordinary Plants that the Fields produce ? then we have

— *Tum Te quoque, Medica ! pulres*
Accipiunt sulci —

Or if you leave his Description of the Vegetable World, and turn to the Muster-Roll of the Roman Heroes, there the Language will be still the same.

Quis te, magne Cato ! tacitum, aut te, Cossæ ! relinquat ?

These Examples *Johnston* follows in the Place before us, and on all such Occasions ; for instance, if he is enumerating the Miracles which God wrought during the Passage of the Children of *Israel* through the Wilderness ; as the bringing Water out of a Rock was one of the most considerable of them, the Expression is,

Limpida de silicibus manarunt flumina venis ;
Et dulces Arabum tesqua rigastis AQUÆ !
Psal. cv. 41.

If he is speaking of the wonderful Care of Providence in feeding all the irrational Creation, and if there is one Species which (as the Naturalists inform us) is sooner deserted by the Parents than any other ; and consequently in a particular Manner to be

be provided for, then you will perceive which that Creature is by the Emphasis of the Stile,

*Gramine qui montes operit : pecorique ministrat
Pabula ; quæstas & tibi, CORVE ! dapes.*
Psal. cxlvii. 9.

If according to the Notions of the *Jews*, the *Wind* is supposed to be the swiftest and fiercest of all God's Creatures, we shall find that where the Poet is calling upon all the *Elements* to praise the Author of their Being, *this Element* in particuliar will be applied to.

*Et nix, cum nebulis ; et, tempestate sonora,
Illius ad nutum qui quatis, EURE ! rates.*
Psal. cxlviii. 8.

I could give a hundred more Instances of this Nature, to shew that these Delicacies are not the Offspring of Chance, but the Productions of the greatest Art.

I am now to consider the Versification of these four Lines of *Johnston's*. In the first Place the Pause is properly varied in both Couplets, the singular and plural Numbers are judiciously alter'd ; and the initial and mixt Alliterations are observed, as are also the Full and the Concealed Rhime, as I have shewn in the first Part of this Discourse.

I go on now with *Buchanan*.

Ver. 2. *But his Delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in his Law doth he meditate Day and Night.*

BUCHANAN

B U C H A N A N.

2. *Sed vitæ rimatur iter melioris, & altâ
Mente Dei leges noctesque diesque revolvit.*

J O H N S T O N.

2. *Mente sed ætherei meditatur jussa parentis,
Seu nox est, roseo seu nitrat axe diis.*

Buchanan's Translation of this Verse is not to be blamed in my Opinion : I cannot say so much of the Language : We had in the preceding Line but one, *erroris iter*, we have now *vitæ melioris iter*. This shews a great Poverty of Expression, especially in the first five Lines of this Work : As to *altâ*, it is in this Place but a mere Expletive, brought in on Purpose to make out the Line.

As to the Versification, the last Line is a fine one, the Vowel *e* is ten Times repeated in it, which occasions the Melody that runs throughout the whole Verse.

As to *Johnston's* Translation of this Verse, it is not better than *Buchanan's*, but his Language is vastly to be preferred : Here is no Repetition of any Thing that went before, no perplext Epithet ; here are no Expletives to make out the Metre : instead of these Imperfections, the purest Latinity is adorned with the most beautiful Figures, as we have observed in the Notes on this Verse.

As to the Versification, both the Lines are extremely finisht, as I have shewn elsewhere. But in this Place I shall make one Remark, which I believe may be of Use to the Reader. I have taken Notice just now that one of *Buchanan's* Lines before us is a very fine one : Now it may be observed throughout both these Translations, that in whatever Place *Buchanan* does well, then *Johnston* will

B

certainly

certainly spare no Pains to surpass him. Let us bring these two Lines together.

Mēte Dēi lēgēs noctēsquē diēsquē rēvolvit

Mēte sed aēthērēi mēditatur jussa parēntis,

Here it was impossible for *Johnston* to surpass *Buchanan* with a continued mixt Alliteration, and therefore he has Recourse to a double *Assultus*, one in the first Hemistich, another in the latter Part of the Verse.

Buchanan has the *e* ten Times in eight Words, *Johnston* has it six Times in the first three, where the Pause is made, and it begins again in the next Syl-
lable, and after it, *ta-sa-pa* strike the Ear so fully, that *Buchanan's* fine Verse is forced to give Way.

Ver. 3. *And he shall be like a Tree planted by the Rivers of Water, that bringeth forth his Fruit in his Season ; his Leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doth shall prosper.*

BUCHANAN.

3. *Ille, velut rigæ quæ margine confita ripæ est
Arbor, erit, quam non violento Sirius æstu
Exurit, non torret hiems : Sed prodiga læto
Proventu beat agricolam ; nec, flore caduco
Arridens, blandâ dominum spe lætat inanem.*

JOHNSTON.

3. *Arboris in morem surget, felicibus auris
Quæ viret ad ripam lenæ fluentis aquæ ;
Cui tempestivis curvantur brachia pomis,*
Nullaque

*Nullaque vernantes decutit aura comas :
Illius adspirans votis clementia cali
Omnia propitio fidere capta veget.*

Buchanan's Translation of this Verse is wrong in several Respects ; he has entirely omitted *whatsoever he doth shall prosper* ; and he has added out of his own Invention, the *violento Strius aestu*, and the *non sorret biems* : As to the rest of the Lines, I have already observed the Impropriety of saying first, that a *Tree brings forth abundantly*, and then that it *does not flatter its Owner with perishing Blossoms*.

As to the *Stile* of this Passage, I observed in the foregoing Verse how idely one Adjective was clapt at the end of the Line for the sake of the Metre ; here we have very unhappily two, *prodiga leto*, neither of which Words signify any Thing to the Sense, but are meer Expletives : Neither is the *inanem* less trifling at the Conclusion of the whole Verse. As to the Versification, it is very good, the Pause is finely varied, and the whole Period full and sonorous.

As to *Johnston's* Translation of this Verse as perfect as possible : The Language is all figurative ; and thoroughly Poetical, and the Versification is adorned with every Art, that can be desired, as I have shewn in the preceding Parts of this Discourse,

Ver. 4. *The Ungodly are not so ; but are like the Chaff which the Wind driveth away.*

BUCHANAN.

4. *Non ita divini gens nescia fœderis, exlex,*

B 2

Contem-

*Contemtrique poli : Subito sed turbine rapti
Pulveris instar erunt, volucris quem concita gyra
Aura levis torquet vacuo ludibria cælo.*

JOHNSTON.

4. *Non ita gens exlex, paleæ sed folibus uſta
Instar erit, volucris quam rotas orbe notus.*

In this Translation *Buchanan* is too tedious in his Interpretation of the Word *ungodly*, he employs a Line and a half on it alone: And in the same Manner he represents Chaff, (which he for the Verse sake, calls Dust) first tost about by a Whirlwind, and then driven about either by a Wheel or in a Circle in the empty Sky.

As to the Language, I can discover no Fault in it, except that *Ludibria* should have been *Eudibrium*, to have agreed with *Quem*. But the two last Lines as to the Versification, are exceeding bad, being followed by six others all of the same *Cæsura* or Pause.

Instead of *Buchanan's* four Hexameter Lines, *Johnston* has but one Hexameter and one Pentameter; and how far they surpass *Buchanan's* in every Respect, is too easily perceived to want any Comment.

Ver. 5. *Therefore the Ungodly shall not stand in the Judgment; nor Sinners in the Congregation of the Righteous.*

BUCHANAN.

5. *Ergo, ubi veridicus judex in nube serenâ
Dicere jus veniet, scelerisque coarguet orbem,*

Non

*Non coram impietas mæstos attollere vultus,
Nec misera audebit justæ se adjungere turbæ.*

JOHNSTON.

5. *Judicis hæc solium fugiet, cætumque piorum,
Ultima cùm dirimet fasque nefasque dies.*

Of *Buchanan's* four Verses, the first Line is all superfluous and trifling, except the Words *ubi* and *judex*; What does *veridicus* signify in this Place, and what is *nube serena* put in for, but purely to make up the necessary Number of Feet? As to the Language, *coarguet* is a rank Prose Verb, and not to be endured in any Sort of Poetry. The Versification is like that of the Lines last mentioned.

Here again *Johnston* has but a single Distich, where *Buchanan* has four Hexameter Lines, with which I leave the Reader to compare them.

- Ver. 6. *For the Lord knoweth the Way of the
Righteous: But the Way of the Ungodly shall
perish.*

BUCHANAN.

6. *Nam pater æthereus justorum & fraude carentium
Novit iter, sensumque tenet; curvosque secuta
Impietas fraudum anfractus scelerata peribit.*

JOHNSTON.

6. *Nam probat astrorum rector vestigia justî;
Diraque cum domino fraus peritura suo est.*

Here again the Translation is too much diffused in the *novit iter, sensumque tenet*; and as to the
Stile,

Stile, we had *impietas* in the last Verse, and we have it here again, as likewise both *fraude* and *fraudum* in this very same Verse; but these are Trifles in Comparison to *scelerata Impietas*, *Wicked Impiety*: As to the Versification, the two last Lines are not amiss, but the former belongs to that tiresome Train of Verses paused all in the same Place, of which Notice has been already taken.

Johnston's Couplet, which answers to these three Hexameters, has not one of the Faults pointed out in Buchanan's Verses, but very properly closes his fine Translation.

I come now to the 104th Psalm.

Ver. 1. *Bless the Lord, O my Soul: O Lord my God, thou art very great, thou art clothed with Honour and Majesty.*

BUCHANAN.

1. *Te rerum, Deus alme, canam Dominumque patremque:
Magne parens, sancta quàm majestate verendus.
Ætheris æternas rector moliris habenas!
Te decor, auratis ambit te gloria pennis,
Et circumfufum vestit pro tegmine lumen.*

JOHNSTON.

1. *Dicere fert animus superùm nova carmina regi,
Quem sacra majestas cingit & ambit bonos,*

The Simplicity and Grandeur of the Beginning of this sublime Psalm is lost by the great Number of

of additional Ideas, which *Buchanan* has injudiciously introduced in his Translation.

How often has God been stiled before we came to this Place, *rerum Dominumque patremque*; and how insipidly is *patrem* immediately followed by *magne parens*? The whole of *Ætheris æternas rector moliris habenas* is foreign to the purpose, and *decor* is brought in between *majestas* and *gloria* meerly for the Sake of the Metre. In the last Place, it must be observed that *Buchanan* has taken a great Part of the next Verse to make up this, and at the same Time has destroyed half its Energy. How great a Difference is there between saying, *thou cloathest thyself with Light as with a Garment*, and *Thou art cloathed with Light*, &c. In the latter Sentiment, the Action ceases, and consequently the Verse languishes.

As to the Language of this Translation, the *circumfusum* in the last Line is in the *Ovidian* Stile. It is hard to say that it adds any Thing to the Sense: As to the Versification in this Place, it is not bad, neither does it deserve much Applause.

I must now observe as to *Johnston's* Translation of the Verse before us, that he has judiciously avoided the Errors he saw in *Buchanan*. He begins with more than common Plainness, in order to rise the higher afterwards. This is the Reason why he omits the Apostrophe in the first Couplet, which is dropt in the Original at the 3d Verse, and in several others after it: To which *Buchanan* did not attend. *Johnston* avails himself of this Liberty warranted by the Original, and reserves the Apostrophe to the 7th Verse. How pure the Language, and how succinct and how proper the Versification is in *Johnston* in this Passage, cannot but be seen.

Ver. 2, 3. *Who coverest thyself with Light, as with a Garment : Who stretchest out the Heavens like a Curtain.*

Who layeth the Beams of his Chambers in the Waters, who maketh the Clouds his Chariot, who walketh upon the Wings of the Wind.

BUCHANAN.

2, 3. *Tu tibi pro velo nitidi tentoria cæli,
Et liquidas curvo suspendis fornice lymphas :
Et levibus ventorum alis per inania vectus,
Fronas ceu celeres volitantia nubila currus.*

JOHNSTON.

2. *Se radiis, ceu veste, tegit ; ceu byssina vela,
Explicat astriferi mœnia vasta poli.*
3. *Inter aquas domus alta trabes expandit eburnas ;
Dantque triumphales nubila summa rotas :
Terga premens Zephyris, Eurisque jugalibus attus,
Pervolat Eoas, occiduasque plagas.*

Buchanan has so jumbled these two Verses together in his Translation (the natural Consequence of using this Sort of Verse) that they cannot be considered separately. The first Remark to be made in this Place is, that *Buchanan* has entirely omitted that fine Thought, *Who layeth the Beams of his Chambers in the Waters*. The Divine Writer is here describing the Omnipresence of God. *He is in the Seas, He is in the Skies, He is in the Winds* all at the same Time; But let us see how the Translation stands as to what *Buchanan* intends for the Sense of this sublime Passage. ‘ You suspend
‘ the Tents of the clear Heavens as a Curtain for
‘ yourself,

‘ yourself, and the liquid Waters in a crooked Arch, and being born through the empty Space upon the light Wings of the Winds, you guide the flying Clouds like a swift Chariot.’ How little this resembles the Original, the Reader will judge the better, when he has seen the other Translation particularly considered. As to the Language of this Passage, it affords a plentiful Harvest of useless Epithets, *nitidi cæli, liquidas lymphas, curvo fornice, levibus alis, volitantia nubila, celeres currus*. As to the Versification, it is of the middling Kind.

I am now to examine *Johnston’s* Translation : In the first Place, *se radiis, ceu veste, tegit*, is inimitably fine ; and so is *ceu byssina vela, Explicat astriferi mœnia vasta poli*. ‘ He covers himself with Rays as with a Robe, and like a linnen Cloth he spreads abroad the vast Limits of the Starry Pole. Amidst the Waters his Palace stretches out its Beams of Ivory, and the lofty Clouds afford him triumphant Chariots. He presses the Backs of the Zephyrs; and drawn by the Eastern Winds yoaked together, flies over the Rising and the Falling Regions of the Heavens.’

How absurd would it be to set about comparing this Passage with *Buchanan* ; for can we find any Thing equal to it in *Homer, Virgil, or Milton* ? especially the *Eurisque jugalibus*. What an Image does that offer to the Imagination ! I say nothing of the Language of this beautiful Passage, or of the Versification ; only, as to the Line which expresses the Rapidity of the Winds, I must observe how it flies along——

Terga premens Zephyris, Eurisque jugalibus ætus.

Ver. 4. *Who maketh His Angels Spirits : His Ministers a flaming Fire.*

BUCHANAN.

4. *Apparent accinctæ auræ flammæque ministræ,
Ut jussa accipiant.*

JOHNSTON.

4. *Stant circum aligeri proceres, flammæque ministræ ;
Et certant alacres, quò jubet ille, sequi.*

It is easily perceived that *Johnston's* Sentiment in this Place, which represents the *Angels* eagerly striving to execute *God's* Commands, very much excels *Buchanan's*, who only makes them in a Readiness to receive the Almighty's Orders.

Ver. 5. *Who laid the Foundation of the Earth : that it should not be removed for ever.*

BUCHANAN.

5. ——— *stat nullo mobilis ævo
Terra, super solidæ nitens fundamina molis,
Pollenti stabilita manu :*

JOHNSTON.

5. *Pondere nixa suo, medio stat in aëre tellus
Pendula ; nullius præcipitanda manu.*

If I break *Buchanan's* Verses to Pieces, it is because I cannot help it : However the Reader will perceive at the same Time how judiciously
Johnston

Johnston acted in choosing the Elegiack Verse alone, which answers so well to the Original. It must likewise be observed how much more difficult a Task *Johnston* set himself, by confining his Translation within such fixed Bounds.

As to *Buchanan's* Translation of the Passage before us, it is too verbose; *stabilita terra, non mobilis*, is much after the Manner of *Naso*, and so is *fundamina solidæ molis*, for *solida fundamina*.

Johnston's two Verses make the Reader see the Earth pendulous in the Air; and the *nullius precipitanda manu* is the original itself.

Ver. 6. *Thou coverdest it with the Deep as with a Garment: The Waters stood above the Mountains,*

BUCHANAN.

6. ————— *terra obruta quondam*
Fluctibus, ut fuso super ardua culmina velo:

JOHNSTON.

6. *Illa prius pelago, ceu velo, tecta latebat;*
Altius & summis montibus æquor erat:

Buchanan's Translation in this Place is in every Respect truly poetical and strong: However it does not so fully or so naturally express the Sense of the Original as *Johnston's*.

Ver. 7, 8. *At thy Rebuke they fled; at the Voice of thy Thunder they hasted away.*

They go up by the Mountains: They go down by the Vallies unto the Place which thou hast founded for them,

BUCHANAN.

- 7, 8. *Sed simul increpuit tua vox, tonitruque tremenda
Insonuere auræ, paulatim ascendere montes
Cernere erat, sensimque cavas subsidere valles,
Inque cavas valles trepidas decurrere lymphas.*

JOHNSTON.

7. *At simul intonuit tua vox, Pater alme! marisque
Cedere jussit aquam; jussa recessit aqua.*
8. *Surgere caperunt montes, & sidere valles,
Collibus incinctæ, nubiferisque jugis.*

Here again Buchanan has mixt two Verses together in such a Manner as that they cannot be parted. As to the Translation it is not right: *As soon as your Voice rattled, and the Air resounded with dreadful Thunder; How much better is at simul intonuit tua Vox!* Again, *paulatim ascendere montes cernere erat, sensimque cavas, &c.* This paulatim and this sensim does not come up to the Original, which is wonderfully exprest in the following Words.

*At simul increpuit tua vox, pater alme! marisque
Cedere jussit aquam; jussa recessit aqua.
Surgere caperunt montes, & sidere valles,
Collibus incinctæ, nubiferisque jugis.*

Neither should it pass unobserved how much this last Line embellishes the Landskip.

Ver. 9. *Thou hast set a Bound that they may not
pass over: That they turn not again to cover the
Earth.*

BUCHANAN.

BUCHANAN.

9. *Neve iterum immissa tellus stagnaret ab unda,
Limitibus compressa suis resonantia plangit
Littora, præscriptas metuens transcendere metas,*

JOHNSTON.

9. *Tu mare sepsisti claustris, ne, fœdere rupto,
Terra repentinis obrueretur aquis.*

As to the Translations before us, I leave the Reader to determine whether any Thing can be more perplexed than *Buchanan's*, or more intelligible than *Johnston's* : In the latter we have the full and natural Sense of the Original in the purest and most Poetical *Latin*; in the former the Water is represented as *fearing to transgress its Bounds*, and yet *beating impetuously against the Shores in order to transgress those Bounds*.

Ver. 10. *He sendeth the Springs into the Vallies,
which run among the Hills.*

BUCHANAN.

10. *Tum liquidi fontes imis de collibus augent
Flumina, per virides undas volventia campos :*

JOHNSTON.

10. *Vallibus in mediis, & rupes inter acutas,
Flumina Tu stabili currere lege jubes.*

In *Buchanan's* two Lines we have again two very unmeaning Epithets, *liquidi fontes*, & *virides campos* :
besides,

besides, the Action is wanting; *Buchanan* does not say *who* sendeth the Waters to run amongst the Hills and the Valleys: This important Circumstance *Johnston* could not overlook, he heightens it (as usual) with the *stabili lege*.

Ver. 11. *They give Drink to every Beast of the Field: The wild Asses quench their Thirst.*

BUCHANAN.

11. *Unde sitim sedent pecudes, quæ pingua tondent
Pascua, quique feris onager saxa in via silvis
Incolit:*

JOHNSTON.

11. *His pecudes, timidique simul saturantur onagri;
Quæque colunt silvas & loca sola feræ.*

In *Buchanan*, *quæ pingua tondent Pascua* is brought in for the sake of the Verse only, and so undoubtedly is *feris* tacked to *silvis*. These Objections cannot be made to *Johnston's* Elegiack Lines.

Ver. 12. *By them shall the Fowls of the Heaven have their Habitation, which sing among the Branches.*

BUCHANAN.

12. — *hic levibus quæ tranant aera pennis,
Per virides passim ramos sua tecta volucres
Concelebrant, mulcentque vagis loca sola querelis,*

JOHN.

JOHNSTON.

12. *Hæc circum glomerantur aves; nidosque loquaces
Intexunt ramis arboreisque comis.*

Here again we meet with *levibus pennis*, we had before *levibus alis*, and whether *concelebrant sua tecta*, to celebrate a House, for inhabiting a House, is good Sense, I will not pretend to determine. All I have Occasion to observe farther in this Place is, that in *Johnston* no such Difficulties occur; on the contrary, how extremely Poetical is,

*nidosque loquaces
Intexunt ramis arboreisque comis.*

Every Word is perfectly *Virgil*: I could likewise have taken Notice that *Hic* in *Buchanan* should have been *Hæc circum*, and indeed the rest of the Line, *levibus quæ tranant aera pennis*, is all in the puerile Way.

Ver. 13. *He watereth the Hills from his Chambers: The Earth is satisfied with the Fruit of thy Works.*

BUCHANAN.

13. *Tu pater aerios montes, camposque jacentes
Nectare cœlesti saturas, fœcundaque rerum
Semina vitales in luminis elicis oras.*

JOHNSTON.

13. *Æthereo tu rore beas juga confita dumis;
Totaque cœlesti sub pede ridet humus.*

Aerios

Aerios montes, and campos jacentes, in Buchanan is a mean Antithesis below the Dignity of the Author : Neither is the *nectare caelesti* to be compared with *Jobnston's Aethereo rore*, any more than the rest of *Buchanan's* three Hexameters with *Jobnston's* Couplet.

Ver. 14. *He causeth the Grass to grow for the Cattle, and Herb for the Service of Man: that he may bring forth Food out of the Earth.*

BUCHANAN.

14. *Unde pecus carpat viridis nova pabula fæni :
Unde olus humanos geniale assurgat in usus :*

JOHNSTON.

14. *Hæc pecori gramen de vœtigalibus arvis;
Hæc homini vœscum sponte ministrat olus.*

This is but the third Place in *Buchanan* where we find the Adjective *viridis* within the Compass of ten Lines, *virides undas, virides ramos, viridis fæni* : However we shall meet with *viridantis* four lines lower : Such is the Elegance of this fine Piece of Poetry ! As for making a Comparison between *Buchanan* and *Jobnston* in this Place, I cannot do it : He that does not see how vastly the latter excels, must be extremely blind.

Ver. 15. *And Wine that maketh glad the Heart of Man, and Oil to make his Face to shine, and Bread which strengthneth Man's Heart.*

BUCHANAN.

BUCHANAN.

15. *Quæque novent fessas cerealia munera vires,
Quæque bilarent mentes jucundi pocula vini,
Quique bilaret vultus succus viridantis olivi.*

JOHNSTON.

15. *Farre novas vires, & vultum pingis olivo ;
Et recreas dulci tristia corda mero.*

Here again *Buchanan* is too diffused, and his *fessas vires*, his *pocula quæ bilarent*, and his *succus qui bilaret*, are in a very low Way. How nervous, how succinct is *Johnston* !

Ver. 16. *The Trees of the Lord are full of Sap :
The Cedars of Lebanon which he hath planted.*

BUCHANAN.

16. *Nec minus arboribus succi genitabilis humor
Sufficitur : Cedro Libanum frondente coronas.*

JOHNSTON.

16. *Silvarumque potens ! Libani sacra culmina cedris
Conferis : hic volucrum pendula tecta locas.*

In the former Verse we had *succus olivi*, here we find *humor succi*. In *Johnston* the Translation of this Verse is so exquisitely fine, that if there was Room for it, more Pages than one might be employed to describe its Beauties.

Ver. 17. *Where the Birds make their Nests : As
for the Stork, the Fir-trees are her House.*

BUCHANAN.

17. *Alitibus nidos : abies tibi confita surgit,
Nutrit ubi implumes peregrina ciconia fatus.*

JOHNSTON.

17. *Apta fretis abies se tollit in æthera ; pullos
Pascit & hic colubris nuncia veris avis.*

The great Difficulty in *Buchanan's* Translation of this Verse is, to determine what *alitibus nidos* belongs to in Grammatical Construction. His Interpreter is of one Opinion, His Annotators are of another. The former would have the Word *ad* understood, the others cry out against this Interpretation, and explain *nidos per appositionem sublucentem* (by a Kind of glimmering Apposition) to relate to *Libanum*, *id est*, in chaste *Latinity*, *Libanum nidos alitibus*.

As for *Johnston*, I am certain he will give his Reader no such Trouble as this, either here or elsewhere.

Ver. 18. *The high Hills are a Refuge for the wild
Goats, and the Rocks for the Conies.*

BUCHANAN.

18. *Tu timidis montes damis ; cava saxa dedisti,
Tutus ut abstrusis habitaret echinus in antris.*

JOHN-

JOHNSTON.

18. *Incolit imbellis latebroſa cuniculus antra ;
Errat & in ſummiſ birta capella jugis.*

Here *Buchanan* for the Sake of his Verſe has taken Leave to alter the Senſe of the Original, and has turned *wild Goats* into *Hedge-Hogs*. *Johnſton* follows the Original as uſual.

Ver. 19. *He appointeth the Moon for Seasons ; the Sun knoweth his going down.*

BUCHANAN,

19. *Tu lunæ incertos vultus per tempora certa
Circumagis : puroque accenſum lumine ſolem
Ducis ad occiduas conſtanti tramite metas.*

JOHNSTON.

19. *Tu lunæ rapidis metiris tempora bigis ;
Sol jubar Heſperiis, te duce, mergit aquis.*

We have now in *Buchanan* another pretty *Anti-theſis*, ſo proper in ſublime Poetry ; *incertos vultus*, and *certa tempora*. As to the next Line,

———— *puroque accenſum lumine ſolem*

Take but away the Word *ſolem*, and we may as well read

———— *patulæ recubans ſub tegmine fagi*

What a wretched expletive Sentence is that *pu-roque accensum lumine* ! And this in a Writer who takes the Liberty to run one Verse of the Original into another ; and in the Metre which he choofes for his Translation may stop short, or advance just as he pleases. As to *Johnston's* Hexameter and Pentameter, which stand against *Buchanan's* three Hexameters in this Place, I leave them to speak for themselves.

Ver. 20. *Thou makest Darknefs, and it is Night :
Wherein all the Beasts of the Forest do creep
forth.*

BUCHANAN.

20. *Inde superfusus cuncta involventibus umbris,
Per tacitas spargis nocturna silentia terras.*

JOHNSTON.

20. *Tu tenebris condisque diem, noctemque reducis ;
Noctivagasque feras, quò lubet, ire jubes ;*

I might observe that in the first of these two Lines of *Buchanan*, *superfusus* and *involventibus* are pretty much alike : But I hasten to the next Verse which has something in it very entertaining.

Per tacitas spargis nocturna silentia terras.

This Verse ought to have been inserted in its proper Place in the *Supplement*, it should never be separated from its Mate

—— *taciti nocturna silentia ponti.*

For

For what in the World can be so pretty as,

The quiet Silence of the silent Sea,

Unless it is

The mighty Silence of the silent Earth.

Here again I venture to leave *Johnston* to himself.

Ver. 21. *The young Lions roar after their Prey,
and seek their Meat from God.*

BUCHANAN.

21. *Tum fera prorepat latebris, silvisque relictis
Prædator vacuis errare leunculus arvis
Audet, Et è cælo mugitu pabula rauco
Te patrem exposcit :*

JOHNSTON.

21. *Tum ruit in prædam soboles animosa leonis ;
Et te mugitu supplice poscit opem.*

In this Place *Buchanan* has three Hexameters and a half, *Johnston* his usual Distich. The Reader cannot but perceive what it increases the Bulk of *Buchanan's* Paraphrase ; è cælo, vacuis arvis, mugitu rauco ; What a Difference is there between that rauco, and *Johnston's* supplice ? and again between leunculus and soboles animosa leonis ? and what a noble Description we have here in *Buchanan* of the Courage of this young Lion,

———— vacuis

—————*vacuis errare leunculus arvis*
Audet—————

He dares to wander in the lonely Fields.

Ver. 22. *The Sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their Dens.*

BUCHANAN.

22. —————*dein rursus sole renato*
Abditur occultis prædatrix turba cavernis.

JOHNSTON.

22. *Ast ubi sol oriens vitreis caput extulit undis,*
Turba ferox latebras quærit, & antra subit.

Rursus in *Buchanan* is a meer Expletive, and of the same Sort is *occultis* joined to *cavernis*. Then as to *prædatrix*, it should not have found Admittance in this Verse, because we have *prædator* in the former. How unlike is all this to *Johnston*?

Ver. 23. *Man goeth forth to his Work, and to his Labour until the Evening.*

BUCHANAN,

23. *Inque vicem subeunt hominumque boumque labores,*
Donec sera rubens accendat lumina vespæ.

JOHNSTON.

23. *Gens hominum interea, stratis excita, labori*
Instat ; & in noctem continuatur opus.

Here

Here again we have more of *Buchanan's* Patch-Work.

———— *bominumque boumque labores*, is not the Sense of the Original, but taken from *Virgil* merely to make out the Verse : As to the next Line, if a School-Boy was to look into the *Diſtionarium Poeticum* for *Vesper*, he would find

———— *sera rubens accendit lumina vesper.*

As to either of these Lines, *Buchanan* does not bring them to submit to the Royal Poet's Meaning ; but leaves the latter for the sake of the former : *Johnston* on the contrary always makes every Thing he meddles with his own : In some Places in this Work he takes from *Ovid*, but then *Ovid* gains exceedingly by passing through his Hands : for Example in this very Poem,

Cedere jussit aquam ; jussa recessit aqua.

Johnston adds a great deal to the Beauty of this Line, by joining it to the former with *marisque* ; and the Manner in which *Ovid* applies it is very trifling ; but in this Place it is introduc'd as properly as possible. In short, every judicious Reader must imagine *Johnston* would have writ this Line if he had never seen *Ovid* ; but nobody can think the same Thing of *Buchanan's* two Lines with Regard to *Virgil*.

Ver. 24. O Lord, how manifold are thy Works ! in Wisdom hast thou made them all.

BUCHANAN.

24. Sic pater in cunctos didis te providus usus.

JOHN-

JOHNSTON.

24. *O Deus ! ampla tuæ quàm sunt miracula dextræ !
O quàm solerti singula mente regis !*

I have already animadverted on these Lines in the Supplement.

Ver. 25, 26. *The Earth is full of thy Riches : So
is this great and wide Sea, wherein are Things
creeping innumerable, both small and great Beasts.
There go the Ships ; there is that Leviathan, whom
thou hast made to play therein.*

BUCHANAN.

- 25, 26. *Nec tantum tellus, genitor, tua munera sentit,
Tam variis fœcunda bonis : Sed & æquora ponti
Fluctibus immensas circumplectentia terras,
Tam laxo spatiosa sinu : Tot millia gentis
Squamigeræ tremula per stagna liquentia cauda
Exsultant : Tot monstra ingentia & horrida visu
Veliferas circumnans puppes : Grandia cete
Effingunt molles vitreo sub marmore lusus.*

JOHNSTON.

25. *Divite tu gazâ terras, & messibus, imples ;
Nec minus est vasti fertilis unda maris :
Squammiger hanc peragrat populus, prolesque parentem
Stipat, & ingentes turba minuta duces.*
26. *Hic, inter circumque rates, maris incola pistrinx
Ludit, & informi mole superstat aquis.*

These two Verses again are so mixt together by Buchanan, that they cannot be parted : And what

a Quantity of Chaff have we here to so little Corn? *aequora circumplectentia immensas terras* are said to be *spatiosa laxo sinu*, and *ingentia monstra* are likewise *horrida visu*, *stagna* are *liquentia*, *puppae* are *veliferas*, and Whales *vastly big*. As to *Johnston*, the Reader will perceive how finely he has express'd this Passage.

But here I must take Notice, that some Persons have imagined *Johnston* ought to have used *cætus* instead of *pistrinx*, which they say is not so good a *Latin Word* as the former. They are properly both *Greek Words*, and one as good as the other in the *Latin Language*. But the Reason why *Johnston* chose *pistrinx* in this Place is very obvious. *Pistrinx* makes the Line perfectly harmonious, *cætus* would have destroyed all its Musick. This the Ear will discover, if the Words are changed, though the Verse is equally the same, as to the concluding Spondaick Foot,

Hic, inter circumque rates, maris incola Cætus.

Now the Reason of this Alteration in the Sound of the Line is, that the Ear perceives the Vowel *i* in every preceding Word in this Verse except *rates*. And if *pistrinx* (in which Word there are two *i*'s) concludes the Line, the Harmony is carried on: But if *cætus* concludes it, the Ear is disappointed, because the Sound, which it had been so long entertained with, drops all on a sudden.

I am satisfied there are many very learned Persons, who, having no musical Ear, imagine all that can be said on this Subject to be nothing but fancy, and that it was by meer Chance that *Virgil* and *Horace* and *Johnston* used such and such Words: They might as well pretend that all *Handel's*

del's Compositions are the Effect of Chance, or that the Banqueting House was as much the Work of Chance as the Gate Way that stands by it, and that *Jones* had no more Art than *Holben*. But of all the Things of this Kind which surprize some Persons, there is nothing startles them so much as to talk of Rhyme in *Latin Verse*. My Master, says a profound Scholar, always cautioned me at School against *Rhimes* in *Latin Verse*: By *Rhimes* I suppose he meant such as those which an ingenious *Spanish* Monk had undertaken to adorn the *Aeneid* with, if the Fates, or rather *Apollo* himself had not put an End to his Existence, before he had finished the first Book: They began thus:

*Arma virumque cano, Trojæ qui primus ab oris
 Italiam venit, flammâ contactus amoris
 Inter iter: Multum & terris jactatus & undâ;
 Multa quoque & bello passus, multumque profunda
 Tartara cum petiit, &c.*

This I imagine was the *Rhime* that was condemned: But if all *Rhime* whatever in *Latin Verse* was exploded, I am very sorry both for the Master and the Scholar: Is there no Rhyme in

Albânique Pâtres, atque altæ mænia Romæ.

Is there no Rhyme in

Totaque thuriferis Panchaia pinguis arenis.

Is there so much Rhyme in

*Anger in hasty Words or Blows,
 Itself discharges on its Foes,*

As

As in

Tityre te patula cecini sub tegmine fagi.

Here is Rhime enough in this single Line of *Virgil's* to furnish out four or five *English* Couplets : And the more I consider of it, the more I am convinced that *Chaucer*, *Dante*, and others brought *Rhime* into Modern Verse, from observing the frequent Use and Harmony of it in *Latin* Verse : But be that as it will, I shall say nothing farther here on this Subject, unless it be to observe once more, that most of what has been offered to the Publick of late on this Head and other Articles of the same Nature, was published above two hundred Years ago in one of the most famous Universities in *Europe*, and that *Johnston* studied in that University, and there perfected himself in this Science, of which he afterwards proved so great a Master : If these useful Instructions have been since lost to us by the Scarceness of the Book, or by any other Accident, it is very unhappy ; but certainly the best Thing that we can do, is to recover them again as fast as possible.

Ver. 27. *These wait all upon thee : That thou mayest
give them their Meat in due Season.*

BUCHANAN.

27. *Alque adeo quæ terra arvis, quæ fluctibus æquor
Educat, à te uno pendent, pater optime, teque
Quæque suo proprium poscunt in tempore victum,*

JOHNSTON.

27. *Quidquid humus, vel pontus alit, te suspicit : Una
Te tempestivas poscit & ore dapes,*

E 2

These

These seem to me to be the three best Lines of *Buchanan* which we have met with in this *Psalms*, and yet *arvis* and *fluctibus* are both superfluous, strictly speaking; neither can the Verses on any Account be supposed to equal *Johnston's*.

Ver. 28. That *thou givest them, they gather*: *Thou openest thine Hand, they are filled with good.*

BUCHANAN.

28. *Te magnam pendente manum, saturantur abunde
Omnia: Te rursus vultum condente, fatiscunt.*

JOHNSTON.

28. *Cuncta legunt epulas, tu quas, pater alme, ministras:
Cuncta saginantur te reserante manum.*

In *Buchanan's* Translation *magnam* is an Expletive, and so is *abunde* in the same Line, and *rursus* in the next: I cannot see any at all in *Johnston*.

Ver. 29, 30. *Thou hidest thy Face, they are troubled:
Thou takest away their Breath, they die, and return to their Dust.*

*Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created: And
thou renewest the Face of the Earth.*

BUCHANAN.

29, 30. *Te tollente animam, subito exanimata recurrunt
In cinerem: Inspirante animam te denuo, surgit
Illico fecundæ sobolis generosa propago,
Et desolatas gens incolit aurea terras.*

JOHN-

JOHNSTON.

29. *Omnia turbantur, tu cùm jubar oculis oris ;
Et fiunt, animam te revocante, cinis.*
30. *Mox ubi vitales inspiras luminis auras,
Sæcla renascuntur, jussaque vernat humus.*

Te tollente animam, exanimata sunt, &c. When you take away their Lives, they are without Life, &c. But by and by when you breathe Life again into them, surgit generosa propago fecundæ sobolis, the generous Offspring of the fruitful Stock ariseth, or suppose it was the fruitful Stock of the generous Offspring, would not that do as well ?

What a Task have I undertaken to compare such empty Stuff as this, with some of the finest Lines that ever any Man writ ? But happily we begin terris advertere proram.

Ver. 31, 32. The Glory of the Lord shall endure for ever : The Lord shall rejoice in his Works. He looketh on the Earth, and it trembleth : He toucheth the Hills, and they smoke.

BUCHANAN.

- 31, 32. *Sic eat, o nullo regnet cum fine per ævum
Majestas divina : Suumque in secula letus
Servet opus Deus : Ille Deus, quo territa tellus
Concutiente tremit, montes tangente vaporant,
Fumifera trepidum nebula testante pavorem.*

JOHNSTON.

31. *Ætheris ergò parens omni cantabitur ævo ;
Gaudebitque operis nobilitate sui.*

32. *Illius*

32. *Illius adpectu tellus tremit infima; fumant
Ardua cælesti culmina tacta manu.*

What Use is there of *per ævum* at the End of the first Line, but to supply a Foot and third of a Foot? As to the Translation of the rest of this Passage, I have shewn elsewhere that it is nothing but *Smoke* without either *Light* or *Heat*, to which Place I refer the Reader, and proceed to the next Verse.

Ver. 33, 34. *I will sing unto the Lord as long as
I live: I will sing Praise unto my God while I
have my Being.
My Meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be
glad in the Lord.*

BUCHANAN.

33, 34. *Hunc ego, dum vivam, dum spiritus hos reget artus,
Usque colam: tantum ille meas facilisque bonusque
Accipiat voces: nempe illo oblector in uno.*

JOHNSTON.

33. *Æthere dum vesci datur, & vitalibus auris,
Hic mihi materies carminis unus erit.*
34. *Grata sit huic, opto, vox hæc; sic gaudia carpam,
Dum recolam Domini munera tanta mei.*

Si sic omnia dixisset! These Lines in *Buchanan* are very fine and perfect in all Respects. The only Superiority in *Johnston* here is, that he expresses the Sense of the Original more fully in the first Verse. *I will sing unto the Lord, I will praise my God*, for which *Buchanan* has nothing but two Words, *usque colam*, *Johnston* a whole Line, and a very strong one,

Hic

Hic mihi materies carminis unus erit.

Ver. 35. Let the Sinners be consumed out of the Earth, and let the Wicked be no more : Bless thou the Lord, O my Soul. Praise ye the Lord.

BUCHANAN.

35. At vero impietas plane extirpetur ab ima Radice, & scelerum stirps nulla repullulet : ac nos Te rerum, Deus alme, patrem Dominumque canemus.

JOHNSTON.

35. O pereant scelerum socii, de stirpe recisi !
O premat infandos fœda ruina lares !
Interea tu læta Dei, mens ! concipe laudes,
Quisquis & hunc orbem, quem regit ille, colis !

I cannot but observe that Buchanan in this Conclusion has followed Horace's Rule.—

servetur ad imum
Qualis ab incepto processerit, & sibi constet.

Ars. P. 126.

As he began this Piece with trifling Expletives, and has hitherto carried it on in the same Manner, so here we see *vero*, *plane*, and *ac nos*, all properly ranged.

As to *Johnston*, the Translation, the Language, the Metre, in this Place, as every where else, are all in the utmost Perfection.

Thus I have gone through these two boasted Psalms ; and now we are come to the Ladies : I begin with her Majesty.

Ad

Ad Mariam Illustrissimam Scotorum Reginam.

“ *Nympha, Caledoniæ quæ nunc feliciter oræ*
 “ *Missa per innumeros sceptrâ tueris avos :*

In this first Couplet the Sense is clear, and the Versification excellent ; the Hexameter Line in particular is delicately alliterated with the Vowel *e* five Times in a full Sound ; but as to the Language, *nunc* is introduced perfectly for the Sake of the Metre, *tueris* is certainly of the present Tense, and *nunc* can never be admitted but when it refers to *olim*, or some such Word in a former Place.

“ *Quæ sortem antevenis meritis, virtutibus annos,*
 “ *Sexum animis, morum nobilitate genus.*

These two Lines could not be found Fault with, were it not that the Pentameter Verse is too gross a Plagiarism, even for a School-boy ; it is almost entirely Ovid's

“ *Exsuperas morum nobilitate genus.*

Trist. 4. 4. 1.

“ *Accipe (sed facilis) cultu donata Latino*
 “ *Carmina fatidici nobile regis opus.*

The Sense and Versification of these two Lines are not to be objected to ; but as for the Language, *nobile* is a meer Expletive. *A noble Work of a King* is in the Burlesque Stile ; *immortal* or *divine* would have added something to the Sense, but *noble* abases it. Not to mention that *nobilitate genus* in the former Couplet comes too close upon *nobile regis opus* in this,

“ *Illâ quidem, Cirrbâ procul & Permesside lympha,*
 “ *Penè sub Arctoi sidere nata poli :*

The

The Language and Versification of this Couplet are both very fine, but the Sense I am afraid will not bear Examination : The Poet is addressing a Book of Verses to a Queen, he thinks them but very indifferent, and the Reason he gives for it is, that they were made in a Country far from *Parnassus*, almost quite under the North Pole. He seems to have forgot *that this is the Country* which his Patroness Queen so happily enjoyed after so long a Train of Ancestors. Surely this must pass at least for a great Blunder.

“ *Non tamen ausus eram malè natum exponere factum,*
 “ *Ne mihi displiceant quæ placuere tibi.*

Here again as to the Language and Versification, there is no Objection to be made : But as to the rest, there is something in them to me unintelligible. I understand by the first Verse he says he did not dare to destroy *his Ill-born Offspring* ; but what to make of the Pentameter Line, I confess myself ignorant.

“ *Nam quod ab ingenio domini sperare nequibant,*
 “ *Debebunt genio forsitan illa tuo.*

How these two Lines, which begin with *nam*, are connected to the former, I cannot tell, because (as I have just now said) I don't know what they mean : Neither can I apprehend clearly, in what Sense *genio* is to be taken in this Couplet : All I am certain of is, that *forsitan*, which is brought in here perfectly for the Sake of the Verse, destroys the Sense, be it what it will ; for to tell his Patroness in the Conclusion of the Epigram, that his

Work may *perhaps* be some how or other the better for her Protection, is a Banter, instead of a Compliment. We come now to *Johnston*.

*Ad Mariam Ereskinam Illustrissimam Comitissam
Marescallanam.*

“ *Nympha, pari quæ sola cares, & Regibus orta,*
“ *Luce tua plus quam nobilitate nites.*

The Sense and Language and Versification of this Couplet, are in every Respect perfect : As to the Language, there is no such Thing as *nunc nites*, and I must take particular Notice of the beautiful Versification of the first Line ; it is alliterated throughout upon the *a*, and for that Reason surpasses *Buchanan's* : As also for the artful varying the Cæsure.

“ *Cui collata potest elinguis Suada videri,*
“ *Juno levis, Cypris fusca, Minerva rudis ;*

This Couplet again is without Fault of any Kind : Neither is any Part of it borrowed from *Ovid*.

“ *Cui domus hæredem debet Kethæa, coævis*
“ *Qui præit, & magnos æquat ephebus ætos :*

These two excellent Verses finish the Character of the Countess of *Marshall*, by telling that she had given so illustrious an Heir to the Family into which she was received.

“ *Non ego te Phrygii pastoris munere dono,*
“ *Una licet vincas tres sine lite Deas.*

This

This I suppose will be allowed to be as delicate a Compliment, and as finely exprest, as ever was made to a Lady.

“ *Accipe Pastori Solymæ quos tradidit hymnos*
 “ *Sacra Trias, cujus te pius urit amor.*

These inimitable Lines cannot be too much admired on every Account ; but especially for the Fineness and Propriety of the Thought. He is to present a Book of Religion, and he does it because Religion is the Passion that inflames his Patroness. What have we like this in *Buchanan* ? All the Reason he gives for publishing his Work was, that the Queen liked it, though he did not : But he does not aim at any Reason from her Character, why she should be pleased with such a Work. But to go on with *Johnston*.

“ *Accipe quod nostrum est, Clariæ tutela cohortis,*
 “ *Cui vestigales sunt Heliconis aquæ.*

Johnston having thus far spoken very properly of his Patroness, and the Work as to the Original, he now comes to speak of himself, *accipe quod nostrum est* : Here he mentions his Translation, and the Reason why he offers it to the Person he chooses, is, because as she is the Protectress of the Muses, it belongs to her of right ; to her to whom the Waters of *Helicon* are tributary. But let us see how he concludes :

“ *Tu pondus lucemque dabis, vitamque camænae,*
 “ *Quæ levis & squallens mox peritura fuit.*

I say nothing of the Language and Versification of this Couplet, which are both as perfect as possible : And I am apt to think, no Epigram ever concluded more happily than this : Here is no *fortitan*, no *perchance*, no *perplexed Thoughts*, no *Enigmatical Expression* ; all is clear, strong, and wonderfully proper. As he has represented his Patroness as the Protectress of the Muses, He says her Favour will give *Weight, Light and Life* to his Verses, which, in themselves being *empty and vile*, would otherwise soon have perished : How artfully does the *levis* stand in Opposition to *pondus*, the *squalens* to *lucem*, the *nox peritura* to *vita* ! If this is not reaching the Summit of *Parnassus* in this Kind of Poetry, what can be so ?

I might very well conclude here, but there is one Thing still behind, and I am willing to get this Matter quite off from my Hands.

The last Refuge the Partizans of *Buchanan* will retreat to, is this ; the very Person whom I would exalt above *Buchanan* has given the strongest Evidence, it will be said, that *Buchanan's* Performance was vastly superior to any Thing he could pretend to. It is certainly proper to hear *Johnston* speak himself, and therefore I shall now present the Reader with the Elegy which he has prefixed to his Psalms.

AD LECTOREM.

Forte quod hic stupeas, (quid enim manifesta negemus?)

Et quod reprendas, candide Lector, habes.

Ikadem magni nemo tentavit Homeri,

Nemo retractavit grande Maronis opus.

Finxit

Finxit Alexandrum Lyssippus, pinxit Apelles ;
 Artificum reliquas respuit ille manus.
 Cur ego Grampigenæ relego vestigia vatis ?
 Cur Buchananæ fila resumo lyræ ?
 Hanc neque quam pulsat numerosa Pindarus arte,
 Teïa nec superet, nec Venusina chelys,
 Hinc mihi nec laudem quæro, nec præmia capto :
 Est Musæ potius pæna timenda meæ.
 Dum Jove prognatam solers imitatur Arachne,
 De trabe sublimi triste pependit onus.
 Dumque puer Clymenes currus agitare paternos
 Non dubitat, cæli pronus ab arce ruit.
 Stultus & Æolides, dum non imitabile fulmen
 Arte refert, misso desuper igne perit.
 Et Satyrus Phæbum, Musas dum provocat amens
 Euippæ soboles, crimen uterque luit.
 Non ego cum superis contendo : Sed area vates
 Quam terit hic, nostris est minus apta rotis.
 Ne pete, quæ fuerit tam vani causa laboris :
 Se Clario quisquis proluit amne, furit.
 Ah, liquor hic, populos qui Phæbi castra sequuntur,
 Fascinat, & memores non finit esse sui.
 Si tamen haud meruit veniam furor, accipe causam,
 Invida quæ Momo forsitan ora premet.
 Cinxit Jessiaden Buchananus veste, pyropis
 Quæ simul & cocco nobiliore nitet.
 Hæc ego quam dono, nec gemmis picta, nec ostro est ;
 Tota sed, ut cernis, stamine texta rudi.
 Rex erat & vates hic cui servimus ; amictus

Et

Et regi & vati non satis unus erat.
 Apta paludato Buchanani purpura regi est,
 Regibus aut si quid grandius orbis habet,
 Nil mihi cum sceptris, ego do velamina vati;
 Hunc decuit cultu simpliciore tegi.
 Induit Abiades Tyrio pro murice setas;
 Seque gregis nivei vellere textit Anos.
 Adde quod hac nostra vivat Buchananus opella,
 Clarius & solito sparget in orbe jubar.
 Splendidius stellas nitet inter luna minores,
 Et violæ lappis, & rosa juncta rubis.
 Non ego dedignor, victus si dicar ab illo
 Qui radiis implet solis utramque domum.
 Cui gens Ausoniæ prius & cum Teutone Gallus
 Cessit, ab hoc vinci cur ego turpe putem?
 Quem pudet Æacidæ fatali cuspide, magni
 Quem piget Æneæ succubuisse manu?
 Hoc ego me solor, me quod post terga relinquat
 Musa Caledonii nata sub axe poli.
 Quo fulget mihi terra parens, patriæque Camænæ,
 Non mea dedecorat pleetra, sed ornat honos.

The Observations I shall make on this Elegy, are these two. This Piece may be looked upon as writ seriously, and then the Answer is, that the Author's too great Modesty made him ignorant of the Perfections of his own Work, and consequently he is the most improper Evidence imaginable; Or else this Performance may be considered as a fine concealed Satyr; which Art he was obliged to make Use of, because the violent Prepossession of those Times

in Favour of *Buchanan*, would not suffer any Thing to be said against him.

That this was the Author's Design in writing this Poem, will appear very evidently, if we look narrowly into it. The Substance of it is this. 'He tells his Reader, perhaps you will be surprized at my undertaking to translate the Psalms of *David* after *Buchanan* : Whoever set about writing an *Iliad* after *Homer*, or an *Eneid* after *Virgil*, &c. All I can say in Excuse of myself is, that whoever plunges into the *Castalian* Stream is mad, and does not know what he does. But if Madness will not be allowed as a sufficient Plea, I will assign another Cause, which perhaps may stop the Mouth of *Momus* himself. The Person in whose Service *Buchanan* and I are engaged, was both a *King* and a *Poet* : *Buchanan* has drest him up in all the Pomp and Splendor of a *Monarch*, I cloath him as a *Poet*.

ego do velamina vati.

Now what can be more truly said and more satirical than this ? *Buchanan's* Translation is a gaudy, pompous Thing, with its outside Show of a vast Variety of Metre ; very fit to set the Multitude of Readers a staring, as the Ornaments of Majesty amuse the common People : As for *Johnston's* Translation, it is perfect Poetry, without all that Ostentation that is to be met with in *Buchanan's* superficial Performance. This is the natural Sense of *Johnston's* Elegy. And we shall be confirmed in this Opinion, when we reflect how improbable it is that *Johnston* would ever have undertaken such a Work as a new Translation of the whole

whole Book of Psalms, if he had thought *Buchanan's* a good one. Again, if he had not intended to have rival'd him in every Respect in his Translation, Why did he affect all that Variety of Metre in the 119th Psalm? But more than this, Why did he so apparently contend with him in his Dedicatory Epigram? Why did he choose a Lady for his Patroness instead of the Archbishop, to whom he dedicated the Specimen of his Psalms? And why did he begin with the very same Word? Do not all these Things make it appear that he desired his true Meaning should be discovered sooner or later? Lastly, how is it possible that he who could write the finest Poetry imaginable of all Kinds, should in reality not know how bad *Buchanan's* was of every Sort, in the Translation which we have been considering!

Here I shall put an End to a Work, which it is evident I undertook only for the sake of Truth. I have no particular View in this Dispute. If I am for removing the Laurel from the Head of one *North Briton*, it is to put it upon the Head of another: And considering the Whole, it is easy to see how this Matter will end: *Buchanan* will be always a Person of High Rank in the learned World, though his Poems should never be mentioned any more: And as to *Johnston*, he may be looked upon as a new Acquisition to the People amongst whom he was born; and not only an Ornament to them, but a Blessing to Mankind: A Person raised up by Providence to turn the most delightful Branch of Learning into its proper Channel, by consecrating it to the Service of Him from Whom it originally flow'd: This cannot but come to pass, if those who have the Capacity will entertain themselves

selves with this fine Work : But most effectually so, if they to whom the Care of Instructing the Rising Generation is committed, should make the proper Use of this wonderful Performance.

Those who are Enemies to the Principles which will by this Means be instilled into young People, will endeavour by all the Ways imaginable to prevent it : They will represent the bringing this modern Book into the Schools as a Design to drive all the Classicks away : They will shrug up their Shoulders, and say *Johnston is very fine*, but we hope we shall not be forbid Reading *Virgil*, and *Horace* to our *Scholars* : No certainly. I presume I may be allowed to say I have taken some Pains (not altogether without Success) to shew why *Virgil*, and *Horace* should be read ; and read with more Pleasure and Advantage by some People than formerly. This Objection I was aware of long since, and therefore I began by saying, what I aimed at was to drive such a mean Performance as *Ovid de Tristibus* out of the Schools, to make Room for *Johnston* ; and this I also did to avoid another Objection which would have been made, namely, the Expence of increasing the present Number of School Books. Now as Care is taken that *Johnston's Psalms* may be had, on as easy Terms as *Ovid de Tristibus*, if the latter is laid aside, the Expence of Books will not be increased ; so that the whole Matter is reduced to this single Point, *Whether the Psalms of David and the Evangelick Canticles, as they are called, and the Te Deum, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments put into Latin Verse, vastly superior to any Part of Ovid's Works, are fitter to be taught in Christian Schools than Ovid de Tristibus ?* This is the single Question.

G

How

How any Person that believes any Thing of Revealed Religion can hesitate one Moment in determining this Question, I do not comprehend ! It is every Day complained of, especially among those who principally are employed in directing the Studies of Youth, that the *Christian Religion* decays extremely, and that the *Holy Scriptures* grow more and more into Contempt : I cannot well see how it should happen otherwise ; What Books are there (whose Charms are inculcated by all the Arts imaginable) which in any Manner relate to those sacred Writings ? Whence then should Persons of Polite Literature acquire any any great Veneration for them, I mean in the Way of Learning ? To supply this Defect I wish that this Author who so highly deserves Admiration, may be allowed as fair an Audience as the rest ; That his Beauties may be pointed out to Youth, as well as those of the other Writers abovementioned : The Consequence of which, in my poor Opinion, will be, that young Persons will imbibe such a Veneration and Esteem for *that Book*, of which *this is so great a Part*, as I believe nothing else can possess them with ; whereas I am apprehensive that the employing it only in Puerile Exercises (that is turning the *English* into *Latin* Verse by Children under the Terror of the Rod) cannot but have a quite contrary Effect, and contribute as much as possible to make it nauseous and disagreeable to them for ever after.

If I was not afraid of being too tedious, I would beg a few Words more on this Subject. Let us but consider the first Line of the *Lord's Prayer* in *Johnston's Latin Poetry*,

Magne

Magne Pater ! cœli qui cingis & incolis æces ;

Is there any body in the World that pretends to a Taste of Learning that can help admiring this Line ? This Description of the Supreme Being surpasses not only all that can be found in *Ovid*, but even in *Homer*, or in *Virgil*, or in any *Pagan Writer* : It conveys to the Reader's Imagination the Idea of a CIRCLE and a CENTRE, and exalts the Understanding to the utmost Pitch. Now what a Pleasure will it be to one who makes the fine Piece of Poetry (of which this Line is the Beginning) Part of his Religion, to call upon those that ridicule that Religion, to produce any thing that can equal it out of all the Treasures of their admired Authors : And the same will be the Case in a Thousand other Instances which this single Book will afford, but I must leave them to be disclosed by other Persons.

F I N I S.

C O R R I G E N D A.

Supplement, Page 11. Line 6. after *anfractus*, add, coupled with such a rough Word as *fraudum*.

Conclusion, Page 20. Line 19. for *increpuit* read *intonuit*.

Is there any body in the World that pre-
 tends to a title or standing that can be ob-
 tained but by the sanction of the Supreme
 Being himself not only all that can be found in
 Ours but even in those of in Virtue or in any
 Power of Nature: It comes to the Reader's imagi-
 nation the idea of a Creator and a Center, and
 claims the Underside of the utmost Pious-
 ty. Now what a Power! One who makes
 the fine Part of the Human Mind, to call upon
 those great principles that produce any
 thing that can equal it out of all the Treasures of
 their appointed Authority: And the same will be the
 Case in a thousand other instances which this in-
 glorious Book will shew, but I must leave them to be
 disclosed by other Persons.



P I W I 2

C O R R I C T I O N

Supplement to the first edition, with corrections
 with such a rough word as possible
 Cambridge, June 20. 1700.

